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# Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 1883 (2009)

## I. Introduction

1. In paragraph 6 of resolution 1883 (2009), the Security Council requested the Secretary-General to report to the Council on a quarterly basis on the fulfilment of the responsibilities of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). The present report is the second submitted pursuant to that resolution.

2. The report provides an update on United Nations activities in Iraq since the last report (S/2009/585), dated 11 November 2009, with a focus on the steps taken to implement resolution 1883 (2009). It presents a summary of key political developments during the period under review, as well as regional and international events concerning Iraq. The report provides an update on the activities of my Special Representative for Iraq, as well as operational and security matters.

## II. Summary of key political and security developments in Iraq

3. The reporting period witnessed weeks of intense negotiations and a protracted debate within the Iraqi Council of Representatives over amendments to the 2005 Election Law which are required for the forthcoming national elections. On 8 November, the Council of Representatives adopted several amendments which were subsequently vetoed by the Vice-President, Tariq al-Hashemi, on 18 November on the grounds that the seat distribution formula and population data used to determine the total number of seats for the Council of Representatives, as well as their distribution per governorate, were discriminating against out-of-country voters.

4. Through its technical advice and mediation efforts, including the good offices of my Special Representative, Ad Melkert, UNAMI helped the parties to reach an agreement on key amendments to the Election Law. As a result, the revised law was adopted on 6 December by the Council of Representatives, and subsequently approved by the Presidency Council. On 13 December, the Presidency Council announced that the date for national elections would be 7 March 2010.

5. Despite delays in the adoption of the Election Law, the registration of political entities and coalitions continued. The registration of electoral coalitions with the Independent High Electoral Commission closed on 13 November and 11 lists have been certified to date.

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6. On 8 December, a few days after the adoption of the revised Election Law, there were five coordinated bombings across Baghdad, which struck a courthouse, two colleges, a mosque and a bank, resulting in the death of more than 100 Iraqis and injuring many more. The following day, 9 December, the Prime Minister, Nuri al-Maliki, in his capacity as Commander-in-Chief of the Iraqi Armed Forces, replaced the Chief of the Baghdad Operations Command. The bombings were a sombre reminder of the threat still posed by armed groups who appear intent on disrupting preparations for national elections and undermining the Government of Iraq's ability to function.

7. On 7 January, the Accountability and Justice Commission announced that 15 political entities would be excluded from participating in the upcoming national elections. On 14 January the Accountability and Justice Commission informed the Independent High Electoral Commission that it disqualified 496 candidate nominees. This figure was increased on 19 January to 511. The excluded candidates have the right to appeal the decision. A number of candidates filed appeals while in other cases political entities decided to replace the excluded candidates. The Board of Commissioners of the Electoral Commission accepted the exclusion of the named candidates and initially planned to certify candidate lists on 3 February, prior to the start of the campaign period scheduled to begin on 7 February. However, on 3 February the Court of Cassation ruled that the review of appeals filed by excluded candidates would be postponed until after the elections, allowing them to run in the elections. If elected, those candidates would have their privileges and immunities deferred until a final decision was made on their appeals.

8. The Accountability and Justice Commission and a number of political parties rejected this court ruling and some publicly stated that the Court of Cassation had no authority to postpone reviewing the appeals, but should instead rule on each case individually. The Electoral Commission, for its part, was uncertain as to whether the decision was binding and sought clarification from the Supreme Federal Court, resulting in the postponement of the campaign period until 12 February. The Speaker of the Council of Representatives called for a meeting on 6 February with the Presidency Council, the Prime Minister, the Speaker and the Chief Justice to discuss the decision of the Court of Cassation. Prior to this meeting, my Special Representative met with the Speaker at the latter's request to discuss the way forward. An emergency meeting of the Council of Representatives, called for 7 February, had no quorum and was postponed until the following day. On 7 February, the Court of Cassation issued an announcement that it would review all appeals filed before the start of the electoral campaign period on or around 12 February. At the time of writing of the present report, the matter continues to be discussed at the highest levels in Iraq.

9. During the reporting period, political disagreements in the Ninewa Governorate remained a matter of concern. In mid-December the (Kurdish) Ninewa Brotherhood List, which continues to boycott the Provincial Council, established offices to assist with the coordination of services in districts that have suspended relations with the Provincial Council in Mosul. The deputy Prime Minister, Rafi al-Issawi, persisted in his efforts to reduce tensions between the Ninewa Brotherhood List and the Al-Hadba National List led by Governor Atheel Nujaifi, making regular visits to both the Ninewa Governorate and the Kurdistan region, during which he met with both sides and placed a particular focus on creating the conditions for improved security.

10. Meanwhile, in an effort to ease tensions in northern Iraq, the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government agreed to set up joint security structures in the Governorates of Kirkuk, Ninewa and Diyala. The new arrangement includes joint patrols and checkpoints consisting of personnel from the Iraqi Army, Iraqi Kurdistan Peshmerga and the Iraqi police, under the coordination of the United States Forces in Iraq. The security plan has received mixed reactions in the affected communities, but the intention remains to build trust between communities, strengthen security coordination ahead of the national elections and create an environment conducive to political dialogue over the disputed territories. Further, I was encouraged by the visit of the Kurdistan Regional Prime Minister, Barham Saleh, to Baghdad on 9 December to discuss numerous outstanding issues between the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan region, as well as the positive response by the Prime Minister.

11. Late in January, there were several more high-profile attacks in Baghdad targeting civilians and government workers. On 25 January, at least 38 people were killed and 74 injured when three car bombs were detonated near three hotels in the centre of the Iraqi capital often frequented by foreign journalists and contractors. On 26 January, a car bomb killed at least 17 people and wounded 80 at a government forensics centre in Baghdad. On 1 February, a female suicide bomber walking among Shiite pilgrims in northern Baghdad detonated an explosives belt killing at least 41 people and wounding more than 100. On 3 February, another suicide bombing in Karbala killed at least 20 pilgrims.

# III. Activities of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq

## A. Political and constitutional activities

12. Throughout the reporting period, my Special Representative for Iraq remained fully engaged in wide-ranging consultations with officials from the Government of Iraq, the Kurdistan Regional Government, the Council of Representatives and members of the diplomatic community in Baghdad. At the invitation of senior Iraqi leaders, and in close coordination with the diplomatic community, my Special Representative facilitated negotiations between political blocs in a bid to reach a consensus on key amendments to the Election Law.

13. On 8 November, my Special Representative paid his second visit to Erbil and Sulaymaniyah to discuss outstanding issues between the federal Government in Baghdad and the Kurdistan Regional Government. To this end, he met with the Kurdistan Regional Prime Minister, Barham Saleh; the Minister for Peshmerga Affairs, Jafar Mustafa; the Speaker of the Kurdish National Assembly, Kamal Kirkuki; and the representative of the Kurdistan Regional Government in Baghdad, Rowsch Shaways.

14. The High-level Task Force comprising senior advisers to the Prime Minister of Iraq and the President of the Kurdish Region continued to meet regularly under UNAMI auspices to discuss key confidence-building measures related to disputed territories. To date, efforts have focused on expediting property claims and restitution for violations that occurred before and after 2003; guaranteeing the right of all Iraqis to educate their children in their mother tongue; and the handling of detainees. With regard to property violations, the Task Force has focused on the

evacuation of occupied government buildings in Kirkuk, particularly schools, as a first step. In November, the Kirkuk Provincial Council also adopted measures recommended by UNAMI for the improved resolution of property disputes and formed a local committee to implement the recommendations. UNAMI will continue to facilitate dialogue and promote local-level activities aimed at building trust and addressing the underlying issues contributing to instability.

15. To this end, my Special Representative visited Kirkuk on 12 and 13 January to meet with all relevant stakeholders and encourage progress at the local level, which included attendance at a meeting of the newly formed committee for the resolution of property and land disputes in Kirkuk. He also visited the Laylan sub-district, a mixed community in the south-eastern part of the Governorate, to meet with Council members and listen to their concerns.

## B. Regional and international developments

16. On 2 November, the Speaker of the Iranian Parliament, Ali Larijani, visited Iraq to discuss bilateral relations between the two countries. On 7 November, the new Egyptian Ambassador to Iraq, Sharif Kamal Shahin, arrived in Baghdad. He is Egypt's first representative to be permanently based in the country since 2005, when the last Egyptian Ambassador to Iraq was assassinated. On 30 December, the Speaker of the Iraqi Parliament, Ayad Samarrai, travelled to Amman to discuss enhanced economic cooperation with Jordan, the status of Iraqi refugees, and out-of-country voting that will take place in Jordan.

17. On 18 December the Government of Iraq requested the immediate withdrawal of Iranian forces that had reportedly deployed in the vicinity of the disputed Al-Fakkah oil field. On 30 December the Government of Iraq sent an official letter of protest to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the two countries agreed to meet with the aim of reaching a common understanding on the precise location of the border. The Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran visited Baghdad on 6 January and both countries agreed to activate the work of a previously established joint border technical committee. On 27 January, a spokesman for the Government Iraq confirmed that all Iranian forces had redeployed from the Al-Fakkah area. The Foreign Minister of Iraq, Hoshyar Zebari, also confirmed that an agreement was reached with the Islamic Republic of Iran to normalize the situation on the borders between the two countries.

18. The reporting period witnessed progress in Iraq's efforts at reintegration into the regional and international economy. The European Union and Iraq concluded a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement on 13 November in order to provide the framework for contractual relations between the European Union and Iraq in trade and economic development. On 23 November the Iraqi Council of Representatives adopted an amendment to its National Investment Law to allow foreigners to own land for housing projects, to speed up the process of applying for investment licenses and to clarify federal and provincial powers with regard to investors.

19. In accordance with the UNAMI mandate to advance cooperation between Iraq and its neighbours, a UNAMI delegation visited Tehran to prepare the start of a small liaison office in Tehran, which will soon become operational.

20. While some initial positive results were achieved during the last reporting period, as outlined in my report (S/2009/539), no further progress has been made in the recovery of Kuwaiti missing persons or property. During his visit to Kuwait from 11 to 15 January 2010, my High-level Coordinator, Gennady Tarasov, reiterated to Iraqi and Kuwaiti officials the need to achieve practical results in this regard. I would like to renew my call on both countries to redouble their efforts in the coming months to achieve visible and significant progress in the search for missing Kuwaiti persons and property, including Kuwaiti archives. I also welcome the decision by the Kuwaiti Council of Ministers to contribute US$ 974,000 to a project sponsored by UNAMI and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) aimed at enhancing the capacity of the Iraqi Ministry of Human Rights in mass grave excavation and the identification of missing persons. It is encouraging that the Iraqi Minister for Human Rights has concurred with this approach.

21. On 18 January, the Foreign Minister of Iraq wrote to the Security Council on the measures that the Government of Iraq intends to take to demonstrate and confirm to the international community the extent of its commitment to non-proliferation. He expressed his hope that the Security Council and the International Atomic Energy Agency will acknowledge these measures and the changes that have taken place in Iraq since the adoption of Security Council resolutions on Iraq pertaining to disarmament.

22. From 26 to 28 January, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General visited Kuwait to discuss the UNAMI mandate to promote regional cooperation. These meetings included the Prime Minister, Sheikh Nasser al-Mohammed al-Ahmed al-Jaber al-Sabah; the Speaker of the Kuwaiti Parliament, Jassem al-Kharafi; and the Chairman of the National Committee for Missing Persons and Prisoners of War Affairs, Ibraheem al-Shaheen. Prior to the visit, the Special Representative met with the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister of Iraq to discuss outstanding issues between Iraq and Kuwait, in connection with relevant provisions of Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations.

## C. Electoral assistance activities

23. The legislative delay in the adoption of amendments to the 2005 Election Law added further burdens on the Independent High Electoral Commission in its efforts to prepare for national elections. On 18 November the Commission suspended candidate nomination because of those delays. On 6 December the Council of Representatives held a special session in order to resolve the political deadlock over the Election Law, primarily with regard to the total number of parliamentary seats and their distribution. Upon a request from the major political blocs, UNAMI facilitated a series of political negotiations prior to the adoption of a final decision and facilitated technical opinions on possible solutions.

24. The final decision of parliament apportions the total number of seats in the Council of Representatives on the basis of 2005 population figures obtained from the Ministry of Trade, while accommodating a population growth of 2.8 per cent annually across all governorates. The adopted decision calls for the future parliament to comprise 325 seats, up from the previous number of 275, of which 310 are general seats and 15 are compensatory, with reserved quotas for component groups. The out-of-country voting is to be treated the same as in-country, votes

being counted in the governorate from which a voter originates. All operational activities nevertheless continued during these legal debates.

25. Following the successful completion of a nationwide voter registration update exercise in August and September 2009, during which more than 1.5 million Iraqis visited local registration centres, the Commission moved forward with compiling the voter list in preparation for parliamentary elections. Consequently, approximately 18.9 million Iraqi voters have now been allocated to around 50,000 polling stations in preparation for Election Day. An estimated 800,000 registered military and police personnel are expected to vote in accordance with special voter lists 48 hours prior to 7 March, thus ensuring that their names will have been removed from the final voter list on Election Day.

26. The Commission continues with preparations for the elections and has received the necessary funds to sign much-delayed contracts and procure materials. Candidate nomination was reopened to accommodate the new amendments to the law and has since closed, with approximately 6,600 candidates nominated from 86 political entities or coalitions. In accordance with Iraqi law, candidates must be vetted by a number of Iraqi institutions, including the Accountability and Justice Commission and the Ministries of Education and Justice. Each list must contain at least 25 per cent women. Following a ballot lottery to determine the order of candidates on the final ballots, the design and specifications have been finalized for each of the 19 ballot papers (one for each governorate and one for out-of-country voting) and around 29 million ballots will be printed between mid-January and mid-February. In addition, UNOPS has funded an initiative that has assisted in training over 29,000 domestic observers who will monitor processes on Election Day.

27. Technical preparations for out-of-country voting are ongoing. Austria, Australia, Canada, Denmark, Egypt, Germany, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jordan, Lebanon, the Netherlands, Sweden, the Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America have been identified for out-of-country voting by the Electoral Commission Board. UNAMI has deployed technical advisers to the out-of-country voting headquarters in Erbil to support the preparation and implementation of the operation and will be deploying additional advisers to each of the host countries. Out-of-country voting is to be conducted over three consecutive days, from 5 to 7 March, with registration and voting implemented concurrently.

28. Following the adoption of the amendments to the Election Law, key procedures for a range of polling and counting processes were developed with UNAMI support, including the finalization of procedures for regular polling and counting in polling stations on Election Day, absentee voting for internally displaced persons registered to vote for their governorate of origin, and special voting using either the voter list or a conditional ballot for several categories of voters unable to cast ballots in regular polling stations on Election Day. UNAMI electoral advisers have also trained Electoral Commission staff on best practices in election delivery. Following this, Electoral Commission staff will begin the training of 360 governorate trainers over a two-week period. This will be followed by a cascade training programme that will ultimately ensure that approximately 300,000 polling station staff are able to conduct polling and counting processes on Election

Day. The primary objective of this is to ensure consistency in the application of procedures in all polling stations throughout Iraq.

29. Acceptance of the election results is a critical issue. Final results will be announced only after the Electoral Commission has adjudicated all formal complaints filed during the election period. UNAMI is supporting the Electoral Commission in developing a robust and timely complaints mechanism to ensure that the credibility of the results is not eroded by a delay in the adjudication of complaints. While it is expected that preliminary results will be published in the days following 7 March, final results could take considerable time. Under the Iraqi Constitution, the Federal Supreme Court will certify the election results.

30. The Government of Iraq's security forces are developing a comprehensive national security plan to enhance security on Election Day and related operations prior and subsequent to it, as security underpins the entire culmination of the electoral process. Violence and attacks against Electoral Commission infrastructure and staff continue to be serious threats to the election.

## D. Humanitarian assistance, reconstruction and development

31. My newly appointed Deputy Special Representative/Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, Christine McNab, undertook a series of key meetings with the Government of Iraq, including the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister and the Minister of Planning, as well as with international partners in Iraq and the region, to discuss the role of the United Nations and the support it will provide in the areas of development, reconstruction and relief assistance.

32. On 26 October 2009, the United Nations country team finalized the first ever United Nations/Government of Iraq common country assessment for Iraq, which was endorsed by the Minister of Planning. The common country assessment provides an analytical basis necessary to support the formulation of evidence-based policy that will ensure both the successful delivery and quality of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). In particular, the final report identified key development challenges facing Iraq as it seeks to achieve stability and growth, with a focus on the primary themes of governance, inclusive economic growth and quality essential services such as health, water and sanitation, shelter and education.

33. From 5 to 7 November, the Government of Iraq led a conference in Erbil to discuss and review strategic priorities for the National Development Plan with national and international stakeholders. The United Nations participated in the conference to ensure the complementary alignment of the development frameworks of the Government and the United Nations. The Government's presentation of its development priorities indicated that it has set a series of key sectoral and national targets. The United Nations presented an analysis of Iraq's progress towards the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals at the national and governorate levels. The United Nations, the donor community and other civil society participants welcomed the Government's leadership in undertaking a successful participatory national development process in which input was received from Iraqi ministries and the Kurdistan Regional Government.

34. The Erbil conference was followed by the UNDAF strategic planning retreat (15-17 November), which concluded successfully with the identification of priority areas to guide United Nations contributions to Iraq's national development priorities for the period 2011-2014. This participatory process was marked by a high level of engagement and commitment from nearly 100 Iraqi partners representing the Government of Iraq, parliamentarians, civil society, the private sector and academia. It was agreed that UNDAF will focus on five priority areas, namely (a) improved governance including the protection of human rights; (b) stronger, more equitable and sustainable economic growth; (c) environmental management and compliance with actions taken on ratified international environmental treaties and obligations; (d) increased access to quality essential services; and (e) investment in human capital and the empowerment of women, youth and children. The finalization of UNDAF will continue over the coming months through a set of joint working groups with the Government.

35. The meeting of the Donor Committee of the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq was held in Baghdad on 8 November 2009. The United Nations Development Group Iraq Trust Fund reported total donor deposits of $1.35 billion, with $1.25 billion approved and transferred for a total of 165 projects. The balance of funds is $135.63 million. The Donor Committee also extended the deadline for programming the remaining funds to 30 June 2010. Participants expressed their support for the independent lessons learned exercise to be undertaken by the United Nations jointly with the World Bank, in cooperation with the Government of Iraq and donor partners in January 2010. The establishment of a new multi-donor trust fund for Iraq was also discussed.

36. Following consultations earlier in 2009 between the Government of Iraq and my Special Adviser on the International Compact with Iraq, Ibrahim Gambari, the "New Partnership" high-level annual review meeting of the Compact was convened on 7 November in Baghdad. The meeting was co-chaired by my Special Adviser and the Iraqi Minister of Finance. The meeting was attended by 20 Member States and speakers from the Iraqi Government. The meeting highlighted the important contribution of the Compact and noted the need to recognize Iraq's sovereignty and to develop a new forum for international cooperation with Iraq. On 18 January, at a meeting chaired by the Deputy Secretary-General, with the Special Adviser and the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General in attendance, over 80 Member States and regional organizations gathered at United Nations Headquarters to recognize the success of the Compact and express their support for a new Iraqi-led framework of partnership.

37. The Iraq Humanitarian Action Plan was launched at the end of December as a joint humanitarian strategy for 2010 to address the immediate and early recovery needs of vulnerable Iraqis. The Plan is not accompanied by detailed project proposals, but instead aims to facilitate fundraising for the estimated $193 million needed for humanitarian operations in Iraq. The Plan itself is structured around three tracks of assistance, namely (a) rapid response to meet basic needs; (b) coherent, intersectoral assistance in 26 priority districts; and (c) ongoing, country-wide responses that cannot be tied to a specific geographical area. The Action Plan was launched with the support of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs as a continuation of the inter-agency consolidated appeal process for Iraq that began in 2008 and was expanded to Iraq and the region in 2009.

38. Humanitarian priorities for the coming year will include addressing the impact of drought, mine action, protection for internally displaced persons, refugees and returnees, and supporting critical social safety nets. The protection of civilians, particularly women, children and minority groups, remains a serious concern, as do the ongoing constraints due to lack of access and security that continue to hinder the ability of humanitarian organizations to effectively assess and respond to unmet needs. I again thank the donor community for its support in addressing humanitarian issues throughout this period and encourage continued engagement.

39. With regard to the support for the Government's public distribution system, on 22 November the World Food Programme (WFP) signed a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Trade under which the two parties will work together to improve the supply chain management of the public distribution system, which provides monthly food rations to 90 per cent of Iraq's population. This reform process will contribute to tackling the problem of food insecurity and malnutrition: it is estimated that 930,000 Iraqis are food insecure and that a further 6.4 million are vulnerable to food insecurity without the system. In addition, food distribution to 1.1 million Iraqis was identified as the most important concern for vulnerable groups including internally displaced persons. WFP also launched a $1.6 million school feeding programme to provide some 172,000 Iraqi primary schoolchildren with a free daily snack to help boost attendance and learning in eight of Iraq's poorest governorates.

40. The World Health Organization (WHO) continued its efforts to reduce the impact of the influenza A (H1N1) pandemic in Iraq by working with international and local experts and communities. WHO efforts focused on the provision of technical guidance, material support, and the training of health-care professionals. These interventions supported the Government of Iraq in implementing preparedness plans, identifying cases and providing immediate health care to minimize serious illness and death, and in disseminating public awareness messages to the Iraqi people on the virus.

41. Overall, there are more than 1 million Iraqi refugees, the majority living in the Syrian Arab Republic and Jordan, according to Governments in the region. There are an additional 1.55 million people internally displaced in Iraq since 2006. In 2008-2009, 426,000 uprooted Iraqis returned to their country. Of this number, 62,000 were returning refugees. While the number of security incidents fell significantly compared to 2006-2007, human rights violations, absence of the rule of law, and lack of access to essential services, shelter and employment opportunities in Iraq continue to pose major challenges; more needs to be done to create conditions for large-scale and sustainable return and reintegration of those displaced within and outside Iraq. In this regard, I thank host Governments in the region for their continued generosity towards Iraqi refugees and asylum-seekers.

42. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) continued to provide support to rehabilitate and reconstruct housing units for internally displaced persons and refugees returning to Iraq. Under the 2009 programme, UNHCR rehabilitated more than 10,000 houses benefiting over 60,000 people and aims to double this number in 2010. UNHCR is also undertaking a number of joint initiatives in Diyala with other members of the United Nations country team to improve livelihoods so as to help to anchor returnees in the communities and ensure that their reintegration process is sustainable. UNHCR also

continues to conduct systematic border monitoring while supporting the Government of Iraq's return registration centres.

43. As part of the ongoing joint United Nations country team/private sector development programme, an action plan for micro, small and medium enterprise development was discussed with Iraqi Government officials and representatives of the private and civic sectors through teams from UNOPS, the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. The meeting considered options for revitalization and diversification of the Iraqi economy, strengthening the competitiveness of Iraqi enterprises, inclusive growth, employment creation and poverty alleviation.

44. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) marked the twentieth anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child through a series of activities. It worked with Iraqi governorates to make commitments to fully implement the Convention and protect children's rights. The nationwide events targeted policymakers and political parties. The Childhood Committee asked Parliament to institute a High Council for Children in Parliament to ensure that children's rights are taken into consideration when legislation is discussed, and to review existing legislation pertaining to children to ensure that it is in accordance with the Convention.

45. To continue addressing the growing illiteracy in Iraq and within the framework of the United Nations Literacy Decade and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) literacy initiative for empowerment, UNESCO supported the Government of Iraq in developing a national literacy action plan that aims at reducing illiteracy in Iraq by 50 per cent by the year 2015.

46. As part of its work to promote good governance in Iraq, UNDP chaired a high-level meeting on media regulation in elections with a focus on the critical and complementary roles of Iraq's media. UNDP brought together a number of institutions to highlight the crucial role of the media in supporting the electoral process. Participants formed a technical working group to organize a national workshop to develop a code of conduct for the media during the elections.

47. The United Nations country team is also focusing on the effects of climate change in Iraq, particularly as it applies to the ongoing drought there. UNESCO reported that water shortages resulting from the collapse of ancient underground aqueducts triggered the migration of some 100,000 people in northern Iraq to find new sources of water. The report warns that, if conditions do not improve quickly, a further 360,000 people currently relying on water tanks will be forced to move. In close cooperation with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UNDP is supporting the development of an emergency response capability to address the issue of climate change and drought, including short-term solutions to disasters related to water shortages.

## E. Human rights activities

48. The UNAMI Human Rights Office, with assistance from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), continued to

work to build the capacity of both the Government of Iraq and civil society organizations with regard to international mechanisms for human rights, including the upcoming universal periodic review of the Human Rights Council. Since October, UNAMI has been assisting an Iraqi Government committee responsible for drafting the national report for the universal periodic review. The report was submitted to the Human Rights Council on 11 November. The Human Rights Office also organized a training workshop for 23 Iraqi civil society organizations on essential skills for effective human rights reporting, which was held in Erbil from 21 to 25 November.

49. The Ministry of Justice and UNAMI have agreed to sign a memorandum of understanding on cooperation between the two organizations. There are provisions in the memorandum that allow for the exchange of information regarding human rights issues and details related to all prisons and detention centres under the jurisdiction of the Ministry. It will also establish protocols to allow the UNAMI Human Rights Office to monitor prisons under the Ministry's jurisdiction. In conjunction with the specialized agencies and United Nations funds and programmes, the Human Rights Office worked on several projects aimed at improving the lives of Iraqi children. One project, entitled "Strengthening protection and justice for children and young people in Iraq", was launched in September by UNICEF, UNFPA and UNAMI and commenced the implementation of the components designed to provide the juvenile justice system in Iraq with strategic direction.

50. On 10 December, to mark Human Rights Day, my Special Representative called on all Iraqi citizens to embrace tolerance towards each other and to respect each other's political rights, as well as cultural, religious, ethnic and gender differences. On 14 December, UNAMI issued its latest human rights report covering the period from 1 January to 30 June 2009. While noting the overall improvement in the security situation in Iraq, the report highlighted an extensive list of issues that remain of concern, in particular the situation regarding the administration of justice, the situation in prisons and detention centres and violence against women. It was noted that significant progress still needs to be achieved to fully restore the rule of law and to systematically address the issue of impunity.

51. The process of establishing an Independent High Commission for Human Rights suffered a setback when the legality of the expert committee that was established to carry out the selection process of commissioners was challenged. The work of the committee has been suspended by the Council of Representatives and will resume only after the elections. It was encouraging that during the application period, which ended on 15 November, more than 1,400 individuals applied from the public for the Commissioners' posts.

52. UNAMI in conjunction with other United Nations agencies has continued to conduct regular monitoring activities concerning the situation between the Government of Iraq and the People's Mujahedin of Iran (PMOI) at Camp Ashraf in Diyala Governorate. Activities including the delivery of food items, family visits and the refurbishment of medical facilities at the PMOI camp were all observed to be continuing on a regular basis. The Iraqi authorities earlier announced their intention to relocate all 3,500 PMOI members residing at the camp to other locations in the country. On 15 December, Iraqi security forces approached the camp and ordered the residents to leave. Buses were waiting outside of the camp to

transport them. None of the residents complied and the episode ended without incident or violence. UNAMI is monitoring the situation and calls upon all parties involved to continue dialogue to reach a resolution that respects the legitimate sovereign rights of Iraq and is consistent with international law and humanitarian standards.

53. I join with my Special Representative in encouraging the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government to promote and protect the rights of minorities and to help put an end to recent patterns of forced displacement and emigration of minorities. During the past year, hundreds of civilians have reportedly been killed in attacks that have targeted the Christian, Shabak, Turkmen and Yazidi communities. I am particularly concerned about the continued attacks against minorities in Ninewa Governorate.

54. In accordance with Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security and resolution 1889 (2009), UNAMI and the United Nations system will continue to support and advocate for women's full, equal and effective participation in peacebuilding processes. It must be emphasized that the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women is at the core of development and human rights. In view of the forthcoming elections, I encourage the Iraqi authorities to ensure that women are allowed to vote freely and without intimidation. I also call on all political parties to ensure that they are well-represented with female candidates.

55. Campaigns calling for women to be free from violence also continued during this reporting period. Under the chairmanship of the Minister for Women's Affairs, a conference was held in Istanbul from 1 to 3 November, attended by representatives from Government ministries, civil society and the United Nations. A key outcome of the conference was the launch of the "Combating violence against women in Iraq" project aimed at developing partnerships to reduce violence against women and strengthening the institutional capacity of the Ministry of Women's Affairs and other ministries, as well as civil society organizations.

## F. Operational, logistic and security issues

56. Overall, the number of security incidents continued to decrease after October and the numbers were below that reported for the early months of 2009. Yet insurgent groups continued to mount mass casualty attacks aimed at the civilian population and governmental structures to destabilize the country and reverse the gains made throughout the year. Since the end of October, there have been spikes in the number of violent incidents. The successful adoption of the election law was immediately followed by a coordinated series of suicide attacks in Baghdad on 8 December in which scores of Iraqi civilians were killed and injured. During the Ashura commemoration in the last week of December, insurgents targeted Shi'a pilgrims in various parts of Baghdad and across the country. However, the number of attacks on pilgrims during religious celebrations had decreased noticeably, owing to increased security measures implemented by Iraq's security forces.

57. On 25 and 26 January, a series of suicide vehicle bomb attacks in Baghdad against three hotels used by western journalists and foreign contractors and a Government police facility killed more than 60 people and injured over 150. In the lead-up to the national elections it is anticipated that further attempts could be made

to stage similar attacks to undermine the democratic process. Sporadic indirect fire attacks continued, targeting the Baghdad International Zone, where many Iraqi Government officials and diplomatic missions reside, and the Baghdad International Airport complex.

58. In the northern region, Mosul remained the principal area of concern, numerous attacks on civilians being reported in the city and nearby townships, as well as in the outlying areas of Sinjar and Tal Afar aimed at fomenting unrest and causing displacement. In addition, political assassinations and the constant targeting of security forces seem to be part of a calculated strategy by insurgents to prevent the stabilization of the area and limit the space for political engagement and reconciliation. Incidents in the central region of Iraq continue to revolve around Kirkuk and are marked by similar attempts to generate mistrust and provoke conflict between local communities, reflecting a clear intent on the part of the insurgents to disrupt the forthcoming elections.

59. In Anbar, one of the most improved areas in terms of overall security, insurgent groups have continued to actively seek to disrupt the political landscape through the continued targeting of political figures, local security forces, tribal leaders and Awakening Council members. This was underlined by the attack on 30 December on the Provincial Council buildings that left the Governor seriously injured and many more killed and wounded. Further to the south, the majority of significant attacks occurred around Hillah in northern Babel Province. The pattern of these attacks continued to indicate a concerted effort by armed groups to re-establish influence in former stronghold areas through the targeting of civilians and Awakening Council members.

60. Other incidents included a multiple bomb attack in Najaf on 14 January, home to some of the holiest shrines and highest educational institutions of the Shi'a faith, an area that seldom sees such incidents. Incident levels remained low in the vicinity of Basrah, although indirect fire attacks still sporadically occur each month targeting the Basrah Air Station. The remaining United States forces located at the Basrah Air Station handed over total control of the complex to Iraqi authorities on 31 December 2009 as part of their overall drawdown.

61. During the reporting period, UNAMI continued to coordinate closely with the Department of Field Support, the Department of Safety and Security, the Department of Management and the Office of Legal Affairs to complete the tendering process for architectural and engineering services for the design of the future United Nations integrated headquarters compound in Baghdad. The tendering and review processes were completed by the end of 2009 and the finalization of a contract is expected shortly.

62. The Mission continues to work with the Department of Field Support and the Procurement Division to finalize the contract for two helicopters which are to be deployed to allow greater mobility throughout the country. Owing to the complex security requirements, along with other factors, negotiations with the vendor are taking longer than was originally expected and registration with the relevant national aviation authorities has also caused delays in the finalization of the contracts. The deployment of the helicopters remains essential to ensure the operational capability to support the United Nations activities within Iraq.

63. Ensuring the safety and well-being of United Nations staff and their ability to deliver assistance to the people and Government of Iraq continues to be of paramount concern to the UNAMI Security Section. The challenge is to balance an increased level of engagement with a comprehensive risk management strategy. The United Nations security partnership programme, being developed with the Government of Iraq's security forces with the support of military advisers from Member States, together with an increase in United Nations security and logistical resources, will be of paramount importance. These measures, together with adequate funding of the necessary security and support requirements, will be vital to maintain, and where possible expand, the mandated role of the United Nations in Iraq in the future.

## IV. Observations

64. The national elections to be held on 7 March will be an important milestone in Iraq's democratic progress, providing an opportunity for millions of Iraqis to exercise their right to vote and elect a government that will shape their country's future for the next four years. It is therefore essential that every effort is made to ensure that the elections are broadly participatory and as inclusive as possible. I also firmly believe that a credible election process will greatly contribute to national reconciliation and give Iraqi leaders a new impetus to work together in a spirit of national unity to rebuild their country after years of conflict. It will also serve to strengthen Iraq's sovereignty and independence at this key juncture in Iraq's history as the United States prepares to draw down its military presence.

65. Since 2003, with United Nations assistance, Iraq has held three successful elections and a national referendum. As in the past, the United Nations will continue to do its utmost to help ensure the success of the forthcoming national elections. UNAMI is committed to continue providing strong technical assistance to the Independent High Electoral Commission and helping to ensure that the results are widely accepted by the Iraqi people.

66. While technical preparations for national elections remain on track, there are still many challenges that lie ahead. First and foremost, it is imperative that the electorate is able to vote in an environment that is largely free of intimidation and violence. As the attacks on 8 December in Baghdad demonstrated, armed groups might attempt more high-profile attacks against civilians and Government institutions in order to disrupt the electoral process. I appeal to the people of Iraq not to be deterred, in the face of these and other criminal acts, from exercising their democratic rights. I also urge the Government of Iraq and its security forces to redouble efforts in the lead-up to the elections to ensure that the elections are as peaceful as possible.

67. Over the past weeks the people of Iraq and their leaders have been dealing with difficult and contentious issues, including the decision on the exclusion of some candidates under the Accountability and Justice Law, as they prepare for parliamentary elections. I commend the Iraqi leadership for its continued efforts to hold timely and inclusive elections, to respect the rule of law and to ensure a process that reflects the will of the Iraqi people as they move towards national reconciliation and stability. I encourage a transparent and non-discriminatory review of candidates who appealed the decision of the Accountability and Justice

Commission, in line with Iraqi law and international standards. This will have a positive impact on election results and ensure acceptance by the Iraqi people.

68. Despite the lengthy negotiations on the Election Law, I was encouraged by the determination and dedication of Iraqi leaders to find workable solutions and compromises. I would like to commend all those involved who worked to finalize the law and keep the electoral timetable on track. In the same spirit, I appeal to all political blocs and leaders to demonstrate true statesmanship during the election campaign, use the mechanisms in place to submit formal complaints, and abide by the final election results once they are certified by the Federal Supreme Court.

69. In order to ensure the success of the elections, UNAMI continues to work closely with the Electoral Commission in the training and accreditation of thousands of Iraqi domestic observer groups and party agents who will monitor the events on Election Day and report any potential irregularities. I would also like to emphasize the importance for all stakeholders, including members of the international community, to work together to manage expectations and convey clear and consistent public messages in the months ahead.

70. The next major political challenge, following the certification of the election results, will be the process of forming a government. It could take some time for political coalitions to be formed and agreements on key leadership and ministerial positions to be reached. I expect all elected representatives to work together in a spirit of national unity and commit themselves to forming a government quickly, and to strive to resolve pending political and constitutional matters that could hinder Iraq's long-term political and economic stability, including the adoption of a viable revenue-sharing arrangement, a hydrocarbon law and the resolution of disputed territories. To this end, UNAMI will continue to promote dialogue through the High-level Task Force, which brings together representatives of the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government, and seek ways to build confidence and mutual trust. UNAMI also stands ready to assist Iraqi leaders in tackling broader political challenges through a process of national dialogue.

71. I also hope that, once the new government is formed, the focus will shift gradually to accelerating the country's reconstruction and development. In this regard, the Iraqi people will expect to see greater efficiency, accountability and transparency on the part of their elected officials. If ordinary Iraqis witness an improvement in their daily lives, they will begin to feel that their votes made a difference. I have therefore been encouraged by the efforts of the Government of Iraq to complete the first National Development Plan in consultation with the United Nations. Although the final version has yet to be completed, the process of developing the plan has provided sufficient basis for the articulation of priority outcome areas within the first United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Iraq (2011-2014).

72. Since finalization of the Framework is being undertaken during the election period, it is being devised in a flexible manner so as to enable any necessary refocusing should the incoming Government request it. Once signed, a critical challenge for the United Nations will be mobilizing funds for activities agreed with Government. It will also be necessary for all stakeholders to agree on the allocation of the remaining balance of funds from the International Trust Fund for Iraq to a new funding mechanism.

73. I was also pleased by the recognition given by Member States to the important contribution the International Compact with Iraq has made over the years and I welcome the decision on the need for a new framework for cooperation between Iraq and the international community. I believe that the National Development Plan will serve as an important basis for the way forward and I look forward to hearing the views of the newly elected Iraqi Government after the elections.

74. The steady shift of focus from humanitarian response to longer term development is supported by all United Nations agencies, funds and programmes. The Iraq Humanitarian Action Plan for 2010 reflects this, including a focus on supporting sustainable recovery and development for vulnerable communities including displaced persons. At the same time, the United Nations continues to study how to achieve the Millennium Development Goals in Iraq, particularly in the areas of health, education, the empowerment of women, and the private sector as a source of employment, particularly for youth.

75. I was pleased to note the combined efforts of the United Nations country team and UNAMI to implement the guidance on integration and draw on their respective areas of strength and expertise so as to deliver a comprehensive package of support to the Government of Iraq in a number of key areas, including water resources management, local development in the disputed territories, and civic registration and census in the post-election period.

76. I firmly believe that greater regional cooperation and adherence to the principle of non-interference can go a long way in contributing to regional stability. In this regard, I continue to encourage greater cooperation between Iraq and its neighbours on issues of mutual concern, including trade, energy, border security and refugees. For its part, the United Nations is committed to supporting efforts towards a productive regional dialogue in all key areas. Moreover, the normalization of Iraq's international status remains an important goal. Following the completion of my report to the Security Council pursuant to resolution 1859 (2008), the United Nations continues to work with members of the Security Council and the Government of Iraq to consider the way forward. Progress on outstanding mandates under Chapter VII of the Charter, including those relating to Kuwait, could create a positive momentum for Iraq's normalization.

77. The repeated terrorist attacks in Iraq since 19 August targeting Government institutions and other locations, which have caused a large number of civilian casualties, are deliberate attempts to undermine the security and stability of the Iraqi State. After each major attack, including the latest ones in Baghdad on 8 December and 25 January, I expressed condemnation and stressed that no cause can justify these abhorrent attacks whose victims are mostly innocent civilians. Following a request from the Government of Iraq, as I noted in my last report, I sent a high-level United Nations team to Baghdad for consultations related to Iraq's security and sovereignty arising from those attacks. On 16 November, in a statement by the President of the Security Council, the Council welcomed the visit and encouraged my efforts in this regard, including the possibility of facilitating technical assistance through the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate.

78. While the United Nations is committed to implementing its mandate in accordance with resolution 1883 (2009), Iraq remains an extremely complex operating environment for the Organization. The safety and security of United Nations personnel continues to remain one of my chief concerns. I am therefore

grateful to a number of Member States that continue to provide security and logistical support for the United Nations presence in Iraq. UNAMI is now actively considering what new arrangements will be needed in the future to enhance its operational capacity, which are likely to require additional financial support from Member States.

79. I would like to thank the UNAMI national and international staff, as well as the personnel of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, for their commitment and endeavours under challenging conditions to assist in rebuilding Iraq. I also wish to express my appreciation to my Special Adviser on the International Compact, Ibrahim Gambari, who has taken up his new post as my Joint Special Representative for the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur. His commitment in supporting the Government of Iraq and the international community through the International Compact has helped to build a platform of engagement to promote peace, good governance and economic development both within Iraq and with its international partners. I also welcome Jerzy Skuratowicz as my new Deputy Special Representative for Political Affairs, who arrived at the Mission on 9 January and will work with my Special Representative to continue the Mission's vital work in promoting political dialogue and national reconciliation.